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affairs of Apollonius. In particular he became director of some 6500 acres of land which Apollonius had received in "gift" from King Philadelphus. Zenon was occupied with the many tasks entailed by the establishment of the irrigation system in this large area and the direction of its agricultural production, along with the numerous industrial activities which were carried on within such an estate. With the death of King Philadelphus in 247 B. C., the great finance minister Apollonius disappeared. But the letters of Zenon do not cease. Rostovtzeff conjectures that Apollonius died in the same year as Philadelphus and that his "gift estate" then reverted to the new king. Zenon, however, remained at Philadelphus in the Fayum where the "gift estate" lay, enjoying as a private capitalist the profits accumulated in his ten years' service as agent of the great Apollonius.

This is merely the setting for the more important constructive ability which Rostovtzeff has shown in the chapter which discusses the general character of the "gift estates" of the early Ptolemies in their larger economic and political bearing; in the separate chapters explaining how the estate at Philadelphia was prepared for cultivation, what grains were sown, the important place of vine-growing, orchards, and market-gardening upon this particular estate; and in the one chapter in which Rostovtzeff's observations as to the stock-breeding, industry, commerce, and transportation on the Philadelphia estate are assembled. There are five appendixes containing other important by-products of the study of the Zenon papyri. Fundamentally the work is a study in agricultural history more than anything else. By this study Professor Rostovtzeff will have added greatly to the high distinction which his previous work has gained for him among historical workmen. The total result of the book is to confirm with a multitude of details his belief in the tremendous importance of the Greek talent for economic and political organization as displayed in the Hellenistic period. One may or may not care for "efficiency", but the Greeks had the gift of "efficiency"—along with other and greater qualities. To these greater qualities Greek "efficiency" did service.

WILLIAM LINN WESTERMANN.

La Ruine de la Civilisation Antique. By GUGLIELMO FERRERO.
(Paris: Plon-Nourrit et Cie. 1921. Pp. 253. 5 fr.)

It will not be safe to neglect this new book of Ferrero's on the theory that one can hazard a safe guess at what the author of *Grandezza e Decadenza* will say. There is here the same dramatic art as of old, the same fondness for crises and cataclysms, the same proneness to substitute *ergo* for *post hoc*, and the same desire to make history didactic, but the doctrine of economic determinism has vanished and the influence of Lombroso can be scented only in a rare cliché here and there.

The first few chapters tell very effectively, if partially, the story of a century from the reign of Septimius Severus to the death of Constantine.

The outstanding points in the narrative are these. The world of 200 A. D. is pictured as highly prosperous. Agriculture, industry, and commerce are flourishing, schools multiply, the arts are in high favor, literature and philosophy are pursued with zeal. But Septimius Severus, in debasing the senate which Rome held to be the source of imperial authority and in adopting the principles of an absolute monarchy, destroyed men's faith in and loyalty to constituted authority. Hence the half-century of anarchy resulted.

Diocletian, a man of great genius, succeeded to some extent in restoring faith in authority again by basing his power on the theory of Oriental absolutism, which recognized the ruler as a divinity. Complete success, however, was no longer possible because the Christians, who were already very strong, refused to recognize the divinity of the ruler. Constantine, his successor, had therefore to compromise with the Christians and surrender the real logical basis of absolutism. The hereditary monarchy which he established (without the aid of the theory of "divine rights"), though adequate for the East, where monarchical principles were traditional, did not have sufficient hold on the imagination of the people of the more republican West. Hence loyalty failed the government again, and a period of anarchy ensued in which the barbarians overran the Western world. Such in brief is the story according to Ferrero.

The style is effective, and the history is free from grave errors so far as it goes. The basic materials for the theoretical part can be found in Eduard Meyer's recent books and in Schulz's *Vom Principat zum Dominat*. What is not so satisfactory is the placing of the emphasis, the slurring of discordant facts, and the perspective. It would be hard to prove by chapter and verse that the senate's authority had counted for so much in the public estimation before 235 A. D. as Ferrero makes out, that the world was then so prosperous, that Diocletian's use of the imperial cult was so very revolutionary, and that Christian democracy so far obstructed the formation of a politically effective autocracy. One looks in vain for an adequate estimate of economic, racial, and social causes of decay that were at work long before the period when Ferrero begins his story. In fact one feels inclined to believe that the author has condensed many acts of a long drama into one and eliminated many of the rôles in order to make the play carry across the footlights. And when the reader reaches the last chapter, *Au Troisième et au Vingtième Siècle*, he wonders whether the tragedy has been only a problem-play after all. He suddenly discovers that it is a case of *De te fabula*. It is well enough to remind delegates sent to our world conferences that there is danger in destroying traditional forms of government in Eastern and Central Europe, and in imposing forms, however liberal, that are neither comprehended nor respected, and that a perilous disrespect for authority and consequent anarchy may result. But it is doubtful whether it was worth

while to distort a century of innocent Roman history in order to acquire a text for this sermon, especially when the "modern democracies" employed in the parallel so badly fit the purpose that Ferrero must leave both England and America almost entirely out of the reckoning. There is after all some virtue in Ranke's dictum of how history should be written.

An English translation of the book entitled *The Ruin of the Ancient Civilization and the Triumph of Christianity* has recently come from the press of G. P. Putnam's Sons. The version, done by the Hon. Lady Whitehead, is by no means literal, but it transfers the contents into idiomatic English without serious leakage.

TENNEY FRANK.

BOOKS OF MEDIEVAL AND MODERN EUROPEAN HISTORY

Mediaeval Contributions to Modern Civilisation: a Series of Lectures delivered at King's College, University of London. Edited by F. J. C. HEARNSHAW, M.A., LL.D., Professor of Mediaeval History in the University of London, with a Preface by ERNEST BARKER, M.A., Principal of King's College. (London: George G. Harrap and Company. 1921. Pp. 268. 10s. 6d.)

HERE are ten lectures delivered in the autumn term of 1920 as part of the general scheme of public lectures at King's College (p. 7)—seven by members of its staff and three by colleagues from other colleges of the university. All show power and learning and their work indicates that the university has solid ground for pride and hope in its new Institute of Historical Research (p. 8).

Professor Hearnshaw leads off with a well-packed but clear sketch of medieval development. He walks confidently, at times over very difficult country, and raises many questions which his fellow lecturers are too optimistically expected to answer (pp. 16-17). The Rev. Claude Jenkins follows with "The Religious Contribution of the Middle Ages" He covers, with generous use of allusion and intricate pattern, many topics which are ecclesiastical rather than religious, but his handling of the necessity of the union of politics and religion (p. 64), of St. Francis's stress on duties rather than rights (p. 65), of the demand for a rational theology (p. 70), and of our debt to medieval sacramentaries and hymns (pp. 76 ff.) is excellent. Professor H. Wildon Carr in his stiff lecture on "Philosophy" essays to demonstrate, not without an occasional resort to dialectic, that the Bergsonian concept of reality as activity (which the lecturer accepts) is a synthesis of the Greek and medieval concepts. The latter "is the concept of the whole course of universal human history . . . as the real work itself which God is in process of accomplishing" (p. 96). Dr. Charles Singer's lecture on "Science" is an outstanding piece of work, and his definition of science as "*the process which makes knowledge*" (p. 108) is most serviceable. "*The Middle Ages begin for*